



## MINNESOTA POLICE AND PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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March 8, 2022

To: Representative Carlos Mariani, Chair, House Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Committee and Representative Brian Johnson, ranking member

RE: Opposition of House File 4026 (Long), Public Safety Related PTSD Reform

Dear Chair Mariani, Ranking Member Johnson, and Members of the Committee:

The Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) is the largest association representing public safety professionals in the State of Minnesota.

**MPPOA opposes House File 4026 (Long), Public Safety Related PTSD Reform, as currently written.**

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) impacts first responders across the United States. Nationally, fire fighters, police officers, emergency medical personnel, and 911 dispatchers are experiencing a record number of PTSD cases. Already this year more than 140 police officers have died by suicide. Both firefighters and police officers are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty.

Unfortunately, the changes outlined in the proposal do not benefit those seeking treatment. This proposal, which includes changes to the PERA pension disability statute, will harm first responders who are struggling with mental health due to many problematic provisions that work against the first responder and only benefit the employer. The current process takes many months - and many first responders are left without an income pending approval, without health insurance pending approval. This bill only extends that time while officers need help.

MPPOA is committed to working with all stakeholders to find commonsense solutions that prioritize the health of first responders but cannot support this bill at this time.

Sincerely,

Brian Peters  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association



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